

Portland Observatory
Portland, Maine
CUMBERLAND Co.

HABS No. ME-1

HABS
ME.

3-PORT

7-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

District of Maine

Historic American Buildings Survey
Josiah T. Tubby, District Officer
537 Congress Street, Portland, Maine

HABS
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3. Port

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"PORTLAND OBSERVATORY"

Portland, Cumberland County, Maine

Owner

Edward H. York
140 Nassau Street
New York City, N. Y.

Date of Erection

1807

Builder

Captain Lemuel Moody was originator of idea of building.

Present Condition

Out of repair, but upper frame work sound, and foundation level.

Number of Stories

Seven

Materials of Construction

Field Stone foundation, with balust of Field Stone.
Frame wood. Exterior walls shingled. Floors single thickness. Stairway to top.

Additional Data

Portland Observatory was built for private enterprise. Purpose of building, was to sight incoming vessels (ships can be sighted at least twelve miles at sea). Owners' flags, which could be seen from town, indicated arrival of ships. It is believed that merchants prepared to do their trading before ships had entered harbor. Portland Observatory was also used in sending aid to ships showing signals of distress. During War of 1812, the Observatory was used as a Watch Tower of the Town. Location of this structure is on one of highest points of land in Portland. The structure can be seen at great distance. Information obtained from Nathan Gould Scrapbook, Portland Public Library.

Charles E. Jannell

Approved:
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Robert F. J. Jannell

June 29, 1936

Reviewed July 7, 36 TWC